



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor
Department of Planning and Development
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**CITY OF SEATTLE
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Application Number: 2300183
Applicant Name: Seattle School District Number One
Address of Proposal: 2025 14th Ave. S., Beacon Hill Elementary School

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Master Use Permit for future construction of a 21,343 sq. ft. addition to and minor interior alterations of an existing public school (Beacon Hill Elementary). The project includes future demolition of two 250 sq. ft. portions of the main school building and of two existing portables (P2 & P3), grading of 6,700 cu. yds. and public school development standard departures for required parking and on-site bus loading.

Note: This MUP Decision is re-published following completion of the Seattle School District's Final SEPA EIS Addendum for the proposal. The substance of this MUP decision is unchanged.

The following approval is required:

SEPA - To approve or condition pursuant to Seattle's SEPA policies. Chapter 25.05, Seattle Municipal Code. (DNS prepared by Seattle Public Schools)

The following Development Standard Departures are requested:

1. To allow less than required additional on-site parking. - SMC 23.45.122.D - (Required 35 additional, Proposed no additional)
2. To allow bus loading within the street right-of-way. - SMC 23.45.122.F

SEPA DETERMINATION: ☐ Exempt ☐ DNS ☐ MDNS ☒ EIS*
 ☐ DNS with conditions
 ☐ DNS involving non-exempt grading, or demolition, or
 another agency with jurisdiction.

* Environmental Documents and SEPA Threshold Determination done by Seattle School District Number One.

BACKGROUND DATA

Site and Vicinity Description

Beacon Hill Elementary School is located on the north/south ridge of Beacon Hill north of S. Hill St., between 13th Ave. S. and 14th Ave. S. Contiguous to the north is a public park. The 1.94 acre site is zoned L-2 (Lowrise Multi-family Two) and slopes moderately down to the southwest. The surrounding area is residential in character with a mix of newer multi-family structures and older single family appearing wood frame ones. Along the east property line, 14th Ave. S. is a two lane arterial with a parking lane on each side. The other adjacent streets are not arterials.

The existing Beacon Elementary School is 32,055 sq. ft. in floor area and serves 386 students. It was constructed in 1976. It was built closer to 14th Ave. S., with its main entry facing that street and further from 13th Ave. S. with the only sizable open spaces at the southwest and northwest corners of the site. These open spaces are not very large for an elementary school. The park to the north is accessed by a stairway reaching the higher elevation of the park field to the school site. Four portable classrooms are located along 13th Ave. E. These will be replaced by the addition proposed here.

Proposal Description

The Seattle School District proposes to add 21,343 sq. ft. to the Beacon Elementary School. Included within this total would be three new classrooms (replacing the portables), conference rooms, an auditorium/lunch room with associated stage, kitchen and storage areas and various workrooms and hallways. The SEPA Addendum discloses that the new facility is designed for a capacity of approximately 400 students. This represents no change in student capacity. The number of teachers, staff and volunteers is expected to be approximately 50.

The addition would be connected to the existing building by way of a new, common hallway running north/south along the eastern edge of the addition. Designed of CMU and metal siding the proposed building has a good deal of modulating wall lines along the western façade which, along with varying roof lines, convey three different building expressions and communicate an indication that the function within is different in each.

Public Comments

A public meeting of the Development Standard Departure Advisory Committee (“Committee”) was held on May 15, 2003 at which public comment was received. Attendance at that meeting was moderate and while support was expressed for the two requested departures, to allow on-street bus loading and to not provide 35 new on-site parking spaces which would be needed for the new addition, there was considerable discussion about other issues. Comments were made about how close the new building is proposed to be to the 13th Ave. S. property line and the height, bulk and scale impacts which may result. Other comments expressed concern over the loss of a children’s play area now generally accessible to the community at the southwest corner of the site. Still others wanted to make sure that more traffic and drop off or pick up traffic would not occur on 13th Ave. S.

ANALYSIS - Development Standard Departure

This Development Standard Departure process is being conducted pursuant to the provisions of Seattle Municipal Code sections 23.79.002-.012. Pursuant to these provisions an Advisory Committee was convened, public comment received, and a written recommendation to the Director of DPD made. This analysis and decision is made pursuant to the requirements of SMC section 23.79.010 that the Director determine the amount of departure to be allowed as well as mitigation measures to be imposed. Criteria set forth in the applicable code sections are to be used for both the Committee's recommendation and the Director's decision.

Criteria for Review

Section SMC 23.79.008 states departures shall be evaluated for consistency with the general objectives and intent of the City's Land Use Code, including the rezone evaluation criteria in Chapter 23.34 of the Seattle Municipal Code, to ensure that the proposed facility is compatible with the character and use of its surroundings. In reaching recommendations, the advisory committee shall consider and balance the interrelationships among the following factors:

- A. Relationship to Surrounding Areas: The advisory committee shall evaluate the acceptable or necessary level of departure according to:
 - (1) Appropriateness in relation to the character and scale of the surrounding area;
 - (2) Presence of edges (significant setbacks, major arterials, topographic breaks, and similar features) which provide a transition in scale;
 - (3) Location and design of structures to reduce the appearance of bulk;
 - (4) Impacts on traffic, noise, circulation and parking in the area; and
 - (5) Impacts on housing and open space.

More flexibility in the development standards may be allowed if the impacts on the surrounding community are anticipated to be negligible or are reduced by mitigation; whereas, a minimal amount or no departure from development standards may be allowed if the anticipated impacts are significant and cannot be satisfactorily mitigated.

- B. Need for Departure: The physical requirements of the specific proposal and the project's relationship to educational needs shall be balanced with the level of impacts on the surrounding area. Greater departures may be allowed for special facilities, such as a gymnasium, which are unique and/or an integral and necessary part of the educational process; whereas, a lesser or no departure may be granted for a facility which can be accommodated within the established development standards.

Relationship to Surrounding Area

To Allow Less than Required On-Site Parking

The proposed remodel and addition would reconfigure the existing parking area in front of the main entrance to the school off 14th Ave. S. to accommodate two ADA accessible parking stalls rather than the three vehicles it now accommodates. No other on-site parking now exists or is proposed to be created. As noted above in the project description, the student population is expected to increase by 14 to 400 and the teacher, staff, and volunteer numbers are expected to

remain essentially constant. The EIS addendum discloses information from an on-street parking study conducted for the District by Shapiro and Associates, Inc. in May of 2003. Using City of Seattle standards, the study found 451 legal parking spaces during weekdays and 459 during evening hours. Measured existing parking use averaged 333 vehicles during the day and 280 vehicles in the evening; 61% utilization in the evening and 74% during the day. Given the slight increases in student population expected, it is reasonable to conclude that an existing tolerable parking situation will continue in a similar manner if the requested parking waiver is granted.

To Allow Bus Loading within the Street Right-of-Way

This represents a continuation of the existing bus loading arrangement at Beacon Hill Elementary. While there is some possibility the creation of the new multi-purpose room with an associated stage area (without a fly loft or backstage area) could result in some new bus trips to the site, any such increase is expected to be very occasional. Essentially, the existing bus loading arrangement, using a portion of the 14th Ave. S. curb line along the school, would continue unchanged. Comment received at the Departure Committee public meeting indicated this arrangement was working satisfactorily.

Need for Departure

For both requested departures, from required on-site vehicle parking and bus loading, a strong necessity arises for granted them because this well attended elementary school has a unusually small site. The site is small even by Seattle standards where existing public school sites are often too small to adequately meet all programmatic needs. With this proposed addition of multi-purpose use, classroom and related spaces there is very little open space left on the site. There is a noticeable shortage of hard surfaced play area for younger children. Only the presence of the contiguous public park area makes the recreation situation workable. The uses proposed are essential for the school, they replace spaces in portable buildings and provide child care, multi-purpose area and kitchen space which are now inadequate or, in the case of child care, missing entirely. These elements of the school program are rightfully being provided on the site rather than additional parking of bus loading areas.

DECISION - DESIGN DEPARTURE

1. *To allow less than required on-site parking.* **Granted.**
(Two on-site spaces provided.)
2. *To allow bus loading within the street right-of-way.* **Granted.**
(On 14th Ave. S.)

ANALYSIS - SEPA

Environmental impacts of the proposal have been analyzed in environmental documents prepared by Seattle School District Number One. These include a January 20, 2004 EIS Addendum for this proposal, an August 26, 2003 checklist Addendum with specific information on the Beacon Hill Elementary School project, Building Excellence Phase II Capital Improvement Program, Draft, Final and Addendum, Supplemental and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statements dated July 11, 2000, September 1, 2000 and November 7, 2000, respectively.

Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) section 25.05.660 provides that proposals can be conditioned or denied in order to mitigate environmental impacts. All conditions must be related to impacts identified in the environmental documents, based on adopted policies, be reasonable and capable of being accomplished. This proposal is reviewed under that substantive SEPA authority.

Disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the environmental documents listed above. This information, supplemental information provided by the applicant (plans, written descriptions of the project, environmental documents, traffic report), and the experience of this agency with review of similar projects form the basis for this analysis and conditioning.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665) establishes the relationship between codes, policies, and environmental review. Specific policies for specific elements of the environment, certain neighborhood plans, and other policies explicitly referenced may serve as the basis for exercising substantive SEPA authority.

The Overview Policy states in part:

"where City regulations have been adopted to address an environmental impact, it shall be presumed that such regulations are adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation (subject to some limitations)."

Under certain limitations/circumstances (SMC 25.05.665 D 1-7) mitigation can be considered. Thus, a more detailed discussion of some of the impacts is appropriate.

Short-Term Impacts

The following temporary or construction-related impacts are expected: decreased air quality due to suspended particulates from demolition and building activities and hydrocarbon emissions from construction vehicles and equipment; increased dust caused by construction activities; potential soil erosion and potential disturbance to subsurface soils during grading, excavation, and general site work; increased traffic and demand for parking from construction equipment and personnel; conflict with normal pedestrian movement adjacent to the site; increased noise; and consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources. Due to the temporary nature and limited scope of these impacts, they are not considered significant (SMC 25.05.794). Although not significant, these impacts are adverse and, in some cases, mitigation is warranted.

Several adopted City codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. Specifically these are: Stormwater, Grading, and Drainage Control Code (grading, site excavation, and soil erosion); Street Use Ordinance (watering streets to suppress dust, removal of debris, and obstruction of the pedestrian right-of-way); the Building Code (construction measures in general); and the Noise Ordinance (construction noise). Compliance with these applicable codes and ordinances will reduce or eliminate short-term impacts to the environment and, with the exception of noise impacts, they will be sufficient without conditioning pursuant to SEPA policies. Further discussion of short term noise, air quality, traffic and parking related impacts follows.

Noise

There will be some grading required to prepare the building site as well as other noise generating construction activities. Noise associated with construction of the building could adversely affect the residential areas in the vicinity of the proposal site. Due to the proximity of residentially zoned areas in relation to the proposal site, the limitations of the Noise Ordinance appear to be inadequate to protect the residential neighborhood. To minimize construction noise impacts to residential neighborhoods, DPD has conditioned projects of a similar scale to limit hours of construction to 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on weekdays and to 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays. This condition has been successfully applied in the past and will be imposed here.

The Department recognizes there may be occasions when critical construction activities of an emergency nature related to safety or traffic issues, or which could substantially shorten the total construction time frame, may need to be completed after regular construction hours as conditioned herein. Therefore, the Department reserves the right to approve waivers of this construction hours restriction. Such waivers must be approved by the Department on a case-by-case basis prior to such work.

It is also recognized that there are quiet non-construction activities that can be done at any time such as, but not limited to, site security, surveillance, monitoring for weather protection, checking tarps, surveying, landscaping, painting, and walking on and around the site and structure. These types of activities are not considered construction and will not be limited by the conditions imposed on this Master Use Permit.

In addition, after the building is fully enclosed, on a floor-by-floor basis, interior work may be done at any time in compliance with the Noise Ordinance with no pre-approval from the Department.

Parking

Construction workers can be expected to arrive at the site in private vehicles. Construction related vehicles, too, will be driven to the site and left for periods of time. Construction workers typically arrive at approximately 6:45 a.m. As there is no space to establish on-site parking these workers will be expected to park on neighboring streets. They will share the on-street space with residents, teachers and staff. Because teachers and staff will be working on the east side of the site, up-hill from the construction area, they are expected to park on streets along the east side of the site and further east as necessary. Construction workers can reasonably be expected to park west of the site as those spaces are near the construction area both in location and in elevation.

As disclosed in the SEPA addendum, weekday, on-street parking within 800 feet of the school averaged 333 vehicles out of 451 parking spaces, or 61% utilization. These measurements were made while school was in session and include faculty and staff generated parking demand. The projected availability of another 118 parking spaces, and additional spaces outside the 800 foot boundary of measurement, indicates that there will be on-street capacity to accommodate construction worker vehicle parking during the construction phase.

Air Quality

Demolition, grading and construction activities each may create adverse air quality impacts in the surrounding area. The Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (“PSCAA”) regulations require control of fugitive dust to protect air quality. A PSCAA permit is required for the removal of hazardous materials such as asbestos. The Seattle Stormwater, Grading and Pollution Control Ordinance regulates on-site grading activities and requires that soil erosion control techniques be initiated for the duration of the work.

Existing regulation is sufficient to control short-term air quality impacts. In order to be certain that PSCAA reviews the proposed demolition it is necessary to file a Notice of Intent to Demolish with that Agency. A condition of this MUP will be to file a PSCAA notice prior to demolition.

Long-Term Impacts

Long-term or use-related impacts are also anticipated from the proposal and include: increased traffic and increased parking demand; possible increase in light and glare; increased bulk and scale of the building; increased ambient noise due to increased human activity; increased demand on public services and utilities; increased energy consumption; and decreased air quality. These long-term impacts are not considered significant because the impacts are minor in scope.

Because the proposal here is to replace existing classroom and program space now contained in portable buildings and to provide new common spaces without an appreciable increase in student, faculty or staff size, the long-term impacts of the proposal are expected to be limited. Traffic and parking impacts would be expected to be nearly nil.

Height, Bulk and Scale

Architectural measures have been designed into the proposed addition to lessen the bulk and scale impacts. These include angular bay windows, modulating wall lines and a landscaped open space at the southwest end of the addition. Because these measures are important in controlling bulk and scale impacts they must remain substantially as shown on MUP drawings on file with DPD at the time of this decision.

Other Impacts

Several adopted codes, ordinances, and agencies will appropriately mitigate the other use-related adverse impacts created by the proposal. Specifically, these are the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (increased airborne emissions); the Seattle Land Use Code (increased light and glare from new lighting of the parking), and the Seattle Energy Code (long-term energy consumption).

The other impacts not noted here as mitigated by codes, ordinances, or conditions (increased ambient noise, increased pedestrian traffic, increased demand on public services (in addition to police services and utilities) are not sufficiently adverse to warrant further mitigation by conditions.

CONDITIONS - SEPA

Prior To Construction Or Grading Permit Issuance

1. File a Notice of Intent to Demolish with PSCAA.

During Construction

The following condition(s) to be enforced during construction shall be posted at the site in a location on the property line that is visible and accessible to the public and to construction personnel from the street right-of-way. If more than one street abuts the site, conditions shall be posted at each street. The conditions will be affixed to placards prepared by DPD. The placards will be issued along with the building permit set of plans. The placards shall be laminated with clear plastic or other weatherproofing material and shall remain in place for the duration of construction.

2. The hours of exterior demolition and construction shall be limited to weekdays between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Once each floor has been fully enclosed, interior construction may occur at any time in compliance with the Noise Ordinance. The Department reserves the right to allow waivers of this restriction on a case by case basis, where such work can be shown to be of an emergency nature, necessitated by safety or street use (traffic) concerns, or which would substantially shorten the overall construction time frame. Prior written approval of any waivers must be obtained from DPD.

Permanent for the Life of the Project

3. Architectural measures designed into the proposed addition to lessen the bulk and scale impacts, including angular bay windows, modulating wall lines and a landscaped open space at the southwest end of the addition, must remain, substantially as shown on MUP drawings on file with DPD at the time of this decision.

Signature: (signature on file) Date: February 9, 2004
Scott Kemp, Senior Land Use Planner
Department of Planning and Development